

The COMMONWEAL

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General Motors' Sliding Scale

MOST of the verbal reaction to the formula reached by General Motors and the United Auto Workers has dealt exclusively with its provision to adjust wages, automatically and within strict limits, with the ups and downs of the cost of living index. It is not surprising to learn that Sweden has had some such system or that certain groups in so advanced an organization as the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union have had a similar sliding scale. The principle had, however, never before been applied on so large a scale here or in a key mass-production industry.

Will its effect be inflationary? Those who contend so claim that it will result in lack of incentive (on whose part, we might inquire) to keep costs and prices down. Others declare that under present conditions the other wage increases which it will influence will accelerate the up tendency and that in consequence periodical automatic wage adjustments of this sort mean only higher

and higher wages pursuing ever higher and higher prices.

As a counterbalance it is undeniable that the avoidance of a big strike now—which would further intensify the unsatisfied demand for new cars—has anti-inflationary, or less inflationary, effects. Moreover, the fact that John L. Lewis has dubbed it another restraining "Little Steel formula" indicates that the limits embodied in the sliding scale provisions of the General Motors settlement will indeed confine the wage fluctuations rather strictly. It is a case of applying the brakes to slow the vehicle to school zone speed rather than to bring it to a complete stop. That General Motors is not planning any increase in prices as a result of the new agreement also tends to limit its inflationary effects.

Less attention has been paid to another provision in the GM settlement. In addition to recognizing the principle of sustaining the purchasing power of the workers, the management accepts the idea of an annual wage improvement factor to "increase the standard of living of the workmen." For this purpose the contract calls for a special increment of three cents per hour each year. For auto workers, if the national average holds for them, this would correspond roughly with the 2 to 2½% increase in productive efficiency which is currently registered by American factory workers year after year. Hence it can be paid without raising costs or prices. The figure is modest, but for a corporation of the General Motors type to commit itself to this proposition, which union leaders have been maintaining all along, is mildly sensational. It is certainly a move in the direction of class peace.

This agreement has also given labor leaders an unparalleled chance to explain why workers are increasingly interested in prices, profits and other factors in enterprise hitherto considered the sole preserve of management. Emil Mazey, still pinch-hitting for the convalescing Walter Reuther of the UAW, issued a statement that the union rededicates itself to its campaign against price increases and called upon the general public to join with the UAW in the fight against inflation. William Collins, New York Regional Director of the AFL, said that unions believe that "the lives of the working people should be made better with each passing day and year," and declared that permanent higher standards of living require both the elimination of mismanagement and profiteering and the increasing of productivity.

There are sharp differences on the meaning and mathematics of all these terms, but the fact that both labor and management are talking about them in a somewhat similar vein is a promising development. This is the aspect of the General Motors settlement which in the long run, if

things continue propitiously, could prove to be the most significant.

Two Loves Have Created Two Cities

SO MUCH newsprint has been written about the infant Israel, that the much larger, even more synthetic state of Western Germany (population 45,000,000; capital, Frankfurt) which just has been pummelled into tentative existence, might better be named Ishmael. On June 1st the London Conference of six powers—U.S., Great Britain, France, and the Benelux trio—announced agreement after only five weeks of conference. Granted that the agreement was arrived at by the old fashioned method of accredited ambassadors, and must be ratified by the participating governments, the constitutional assembly of the new state has been scheduled to meet on Sept. 1.

This new state, with a population bigger than that of France herself, perpetuates, by its coming into existence, the division of Germany. Russia retains control over Eastern Germany, with a population of something over 17 millions, and so long as there is a Berlin, there will be, potentially, a united Germany. By our seven-fold creation of Western Germany, we may be assuring the Russians that when that united Germany shall come to be, it shall likely be theirs. We are deliberately making a new Ulster, which will have, O yes, coal, coke and steel that are adequate, and lots of ERP food, and plenty of invested capital. But, though we know all the answers, it is possible that there still may be a few questions that we do not know.

Amongst the plethora of fears that beset us, we must establish some priorities, and the first of these is Russia. Will the Western Germany we are so busily building up, with its Ruhr economy controlled by the French, with Anglo American recommendations that the German trade associations allocate raw materials and set production quotas, with 20% of the votes in local elections in Bavaria already going to former Nazis, be a highly dependable ally against Russia? Will Western Germany prove rather to be what the Russians claim it is, our chosen battleground for World War III, and the spearhead for U.S. troops and matériel? Germany's nuisance value for the past hundred years has been unquestionable: will a third-day resurrection prove French fears right a fourth time?

It seems a sad pity that the United Nations never reflected upon Milton's dictum that they also serve who only stand and wait. To rush in with our complicated democratic machinery, and ram adult political solutions upon a people kept for more than a generation in a state of democratic infantilism, seems a fool's errand. We want the Germans to vote only because we ourselves cannot decide what to do with them; we

give them free choice because we find it so fatiguing, and are ourselves weary of decisions. At least the Russians and the French have clear (if hardly kindly) heads. We cannot be cruel even though we know it would now be the only way to be kind.

Western Germany, from its blueprints, seems neither politically viable, economically sound, nor particularly sanitary. It is doubtful if states can be synthetically created; they, too, come under our and Adam's curse, and must be born in travail. With power given by us to the German trade groups, and decartelization continued as a policy only in close cooperation with the manager-owners, Western Germany promises to be an economic entity about as adequate as was Stresemann's Germany or Dawes's plan. History repeat itself; even if you wind up the gramophone the only way to prevent it is to change the record. And this, so far, only the Russians have done. On our side, there is French fear, aggravated by American annoyance at this gadget underwritten but that won't work; and British compromise. On the other, Russia's mirage of a United Germany, eventually of a United Europe, and the Russian reality of a vast concentration camp. Two loves have created two cities: Berlin and Frankfurt, and they have made them, or are making, in their own image and likeness. But the measure of either's success will be, if a Germany can be evolved, through our help, or through Russia's, or, most of all, through her own, which will be a contributory factor, and not a menace, to world order.

The Columbia Floods

THE disastrous floods in the Northwest—proclaimed officially a "disaster area" by the President and by the Red Cross—strike the country a genuinely terrifying double blow. There is the immediate human loss of persons drowned, homes swept away and ruined, wealth—\$75,000,000 estimated—wiped out. The whole shipbuilding town of Vanport, the war-grown center of 18,500 population, is simply listed in the early reports as a "dead city," with the actual personal deaths unknown because of the quick and overwhelming disorganization. Quickly and immediately, relief is needed, and prayers for the dead.

But the other blow is harder: the disaster which has come gradually and crushingly and penetrated deeper into that marvelous land. If the Columbia River Valley is already plundered by American industrial civilization so that this ruin is here in the new and wonderful area of the farthest Northwest, what fastness has this nation and what future the coming generations? No river in the world has seemed greater than the Columbia. Its waters, pouring into the sea, are just less than the Mississippi's. Its flow has been

classified as clear, and even, or better, indeed, than even. In summer, when its desert moonlands behind the coastal mountains are driest of rain but filled with sun which, with moisture, can force the most prodigious growth, the Columbia gets its highest water from the snows melting in the mountains which rise distantly and enormously on every horizon. The beauty of the land, and the breadth of it have built a legend which is true. It is an Intermountain, a Northwest and a Pacific Empire, which we thought, still, was a Land of Promise.

A flood like this, of course, is Nature's work, but unless a flood like this teaches us that men are a part of nature, we are certainly utterly ruined. We cannot dictate a winter's snowfall, nor spring rains, and cannot govern the rate of thaw over the crucial weeks from the Rockies of Canada south and westward to the ocean, but men do dispose of the surface of the globe and its cover, as wind and frost and animals and plants do, and we are implicated in the natural forces that hold or hurry the waters and their sediment on the way. In this country, since the Indians were displaced, man's business has always seemed to lay bare the globe and to rush the waters.

All the supposedly "special" matters of the West must be seen with this in mind—with Vanport eliminated, flood crests sweeping the fabulously productive Willamette, floods back in the dry Great Bend country and up the crest of the Rockies, man's hugest work, the Grand Coulee project, dwarfed by inundation in the desert. Forest development, grazing laws, water rights; irrigation, conservation, water power; regional planning, the Columbia River Authority—all these matters which the people of the country govern, affect the land to strip it bare, or hold and build it up. The first standard in judging all these measures has got to be, not the pleasant profits of the present generation of exploiters, nor the demagogic success of one Party at the polls, but the long-term cooperation with the rest of nature which men must intelligently serve, if their children are to eat and their land live.

The States Are Traduced

THE VOICE of America which sends out news, speeches, music, educational items and entertainment by short wave to foreign listeners is one of this country's mild attempts at propaganda. Ever since it was started it has been in trouble and now it is in trouble again. This time again it is causing immense distress to the Senators, as usual; to the State Department, as usual; to the states of Colorado, Nevada, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah and Wyoming which had not noticeably suffered before; to a Machiavelian script writer named, of course, Borgia, who has lost his job with NBC;

to his immediate boss Mr. Gandero who has lost his job with NBC; and to the officials of NBC who hired and fired the above-mentioned minor employees and have been crawling around apologizing until they have lost all dignity whatever.

The trouble started when Mr. Borgia sat down to work with John Gunther's "Inside USA" in front of him and a whole pile of WPA Guide Books to the various states. Mr. Borgia typed out "Two persons are supposedly flying in an airplane. They talk about Nevada. First Voice: this doesn't seem like the West but like a Siberian steppe. Second Voice: that isn't snow; that's the desert." Mr. Borgia sighed and looked for a joke. "Nevada's two principal cities are in competition. In Las Vegas people get married and in Reno they get divorced." Then Mr. Borgia rode up and down the Rockefeller Center elevators, walked up and down the long NBC corridors, peering into one studio after another in search of Mr. Gandero, an author desiring to meet the critics, but that evening Mr. James Burnham ("The Case for de Gaulle") was meeting the critics on television, the FBI were busy in the basement, and so Mr. Borgia's script was processed, put on the air, without benefit of supervision, and so all over the world, wherever Spanish is understood, Nevada was disgraced. In Argentina men stopped other men in the street and said "Have you heard the one about Reno?"

But Mr. Borgia labored quietly on, disgracing other states, and perhaps never knew until the Senators rose to defend each one his native state, that his little efforts were "vicious, slanderous and un-American." Now he writes scripts no longer since in the words of Senator Martin of Pennsylvania, not another word that "defames and ridicules America" shall ever go out on the air.

There is no moral to all this except that the Senators must be allowed to find their fun wherever they can—and that vaudeville jokes when they are sent out in Spanish cost you your job, but when they are told in English get you a sponsor.

Four of the First CPA Awards

THE Catholic Press Association, meeting at Cleveland, has just made its first annual awards (for the best material published by its members during 1947). It announced that THE COMMONWEAL had published the best editorial, "Christmas," a signed editorial by C. G. Paulding in the December 19 issue; the best biographical sketch or interview, "Sister Margit," by Hal Lehrman in the May 16 issue; the two best poems, first place to Alastair Miller's "Confiteor," in the December 19 issue, and second to "God Is a Strange Lover," by Jessica Powers, in the January 24 issue.

CATHOLIC INTERNATIONAL NEWS

PALESTINE EVENTS MAY CAUSE POSTPONEMENT OF CONSISTORY

Rome, 5/27 (CIP)—Events in Palestine may have the effect that the Consistory which Pope Pius XII planned to hold in June will have to be postponed because they may prevent several of the Eastern Patriarchs from going to Rome. It is learned from a well-informed source, at the Consistory, the Pope is planning to confirm the election of two new Patriarchs of the Eastern Rite and to invest a third Patriarch as well as several Archbishops of the Eastern and Latin Rites with the Pallium, the sign of their dignity. Well-informed sources declare, on the other hand, that it is extremely unlikely that new Cardinals will be created at the Consistory.

Questions concerning the Catholic Church of the Eastern Rites are expected to figure prominently on the agenda of the next Consistory. Circles close to the Vatican point out that lately there have been many individual conversions and some conversions of small groups, especially in the Near East, and that there is well-founded hope that this development will continue. The establishment of diplomatic relations with Egypt and the Lebanon Republic has greatly increased the prestige of the Vatican in the Near East. The gradual establishment of diplomatic relations with Persia, Iraq, Syria, and perhaps even Turkey is believed possible.

Concerning the European nations East of the "Iron Curtain," on the other hand, Vatican circles are reported to be less hopeful. It is pointed out, however, that, while the situation of the Church is extremely grave in Yugoslavia, Rumania and Albania, the Church's influence is deeply rooted in Poland and Hungary. This explains, it is emphasized, why the Communists in those countries show a great deal of caution in their dealings with the Church, knowing that its centuries-old position cannot be undermined in a short time.

CHRISTIANS, MOSLEMS AND JEWS HONOR MELKHITE PATRIARCH

Cairo, 5/31 (CIP)—One of the first visits which His Beatitude, *Patriarch Maximos IV*, Head of the Catholics of the Melkhite Rite, made after his recent arrival in Cairo was to the Grand Rabbi of Egypt, *Haim Nahoum Effendi*. In view of the tension now existing between Arabs and Jews because of events in Palestine, this gesture of courtesy is especially significant. The Grand Rabbi previously attended a special Thanksgiving Service held at Faggalah Cathedral in honor of the Patriarch. The Melkhites are Arabs by language and nationality. The Melkhite Catholic Patriarch, who holds the title of Patriarch of Antioch, usually resides at Damascus, Syria, in the summer months, at Cairo, Egypt, in the winter months.

Moslem, Orthodox and Jewish dignitaries as well as members of the Catholic hierarchy and of the diplomatic corps were present at the Thanksgiving service. They

included the Apostolic Internuncio in Egypt, *Archbishop A. Hughes*; the Melkhite Patriarchal Vicar for Egypt, *Bishop Dionysios Kfoury*; the Governor of Cairo Province, *Mohamed Riad*, who represented the Prime Minister; and the Police Chief of Cairo, *Kaimakam Ahmed Ihsan Bey*.

On his arrival in Cairo, Patriarch Maximos was received by *King Farouk's* Grand Chamberlain, *Abdel Latif Talaat Pasha*.

COMMUNISM MAKES SLOW BUT SURE PROGRESS IN POLAND

Warsaw, 5/26 (CIP)—Poland's Communist Party, which calls itself the Polish Workers' Party (*Polska Partja Robotnicza, P.P.R.*), announced recently that its campaign among the farmers has been so successful that there are at present 200,000 farmers among its 900,000 members.

A special effort was also made to enlist the school teachers, many of whom have shown themselves very recalcitrant towards the new regime. An announcement was made recently that 26,000 out of a total of 75,000 school teachers are now members of the Communist Party or the Communist-dominated Socialist Party. It was not revealed, however, how many teachers joined the one party and how many joined the other.

The Communists are also gradually strengthening their grip on the cultural life of the country. This is illustrated by the recent announcement that of 41 permanent theatres existing in Poland, 29 have become State property.

MOSLEMS REPLACE CATHOLICS AS MAJORITY IN PART OF POLAND

Warsaw, 5/24 (CIP)—The Soviet Government has settled approximately 50,000 Tartars from the Crimea in the region between Vilna and Grodno, formerly part of Poland, so that this district, where formerly a majority of the population was Catholic, now has a Moslem majority. The Tartars have been expelled by force from their former homes. The Moscow Government "liquidated" their "autonomous Republic," claiming that the Tartars were disloyal under the Nazi occupation. Many Poles, on the other hand, left the Vilna-Grodno area after its annexation by the Soviet Union.

THREE PRIESTS ORDAINED AMONG UKRAINIAN D.P.'s IN BAVARIA

Munich, 5/27 (CIP)—*Bishop Ivan Bucko*, Titular Bishop of Cadi and Visitor Apostolic for the Ukrainian Catholics of the Eastern Rite residing in Great Britain, France, Holland, Belgium and Germany, recently ordained three Ukrainian priests of the Eastern Rite in Munich. He is planning to spend two months in Germany and to return from there to Rome where he now has his permanent residence.

Bishop Bucko is a native of the Lvov Archdiocese (now part of the Soviet Union) and is a former Auxiliary Bishop of Lvov. A large number of Ukrainian Catholics are now refugees or Displaced Persons in Western Europe.

Adoremus

*"laeti triumphantes . . .
venite adoremus Dominum."*

I.

Shall all of the responses be now apportioned to the birds?
To leap be the lamb's peculiarity? to flit, the flying-fish's?

Cows, quiet as bronzes, let radiance seep to the bone,
While man, looking at creation through the miasma of his wishes,

Finds it fit either for nothing or for a few bitter words?
Shall the oppressed jay and starling in clownish tone

Chatter, and make shimmer their target-forming feathers,
While man, who thinks himself the paragon of the earth,
Uses his prerogative in all sorts of weathers

To make reasons for groaning, and then to proceed to groan?

And to make of his unique means of expressing mirth

A vehicle for sourness, turned-in on itself, and brittle,
While the unlaughing otters cavort down muddy banks?

Shall the squirrel still scamper, though acorns be few and little,

While man fires his wheatfields and complains of a dearth?
I say, if we think ourselves better than the incalculable ranks

Of our dread, or gentle, or comical contemporaries,
Let us then show it in our presenting of praise;

For between the three bears and the three beautiful Marys

What gulf is fixed, 'save in the gift of giving thanks?

And if I feel my heart, in these almost doomed days,

In this valley of grinding teeth, to grow heavy and to harden,

Let me remember still that the due love is still due;

For the earth is a granary, the earth is a garden,
And my despair is the necessary product of my own ways;
My strength and virtue lessen, and compass my own rue;

But the unspeakable and unimaginable glory
Of the divine working of circling beauty and power

Blazes, no less transcendent than in the earliest story,
And quite impractical flowers grow where they always grew.

Let me then constantly adore, in however harassed an hour,

The inconceivable Maker of the inconceivable but daily
Procession of mysteries which rounds the daily round;

And though the long shadow fall, let my heart rise gaily,
For the shadow is my own: beyond me is founded the tower.

The shadow is my own, lain in mourning along the ground,
But the tower for ever stands, from bedrock to highest distance,

Made firm by the indivisible, infinitely divided One:

Whose deaf ears are drummed on by each sequestered existence,

Whose sightless eyes beacon from the empyrean to the profound,

Whose mouth is my neighbor's, Whose hard heart is a sun,
And Whose will shall be done.

II.

Many are the wonders of the world, and man is the most

Wonderful; and of man the beauties also are many,
But more purely beautiful are ocean, and sky, and hill.

Among the beauties and wonders is nutriment too much for any

However avid intelligence between womb-fruit and ghost.
Thus, considering the firmament and my own so fallible will,

Let me constantly adore the inconceivable Maker,
And, adoring the Maker, let me marvel at my kind again;
For the pigment of the painter and the leaven of the baker

Equally attest to the glory of God and to human skill.
Innumerable are His residences, and one is in every brain.

The accomplishments of men are the works of God, but ever

Are the works of God distinguishable from the accomplishments of men;

Godward from man the absolute chasms eternally sever,
But manward from God the universe is an inseparable chain.

Then first let me stir my idle, my shamefully unpractised pen

In homage to the whole of the impersonal creation,
The revolving stage where each acts a partly written part.

Let my heart rise gaily, buoyed upon constant adoration,
Seeing the huge majesty of the surges, or the anxiety of the wren;

Or hearing among the leaves the spasmodic tattle-tale start
Sibilantly and suddenly, at the end of the dry season,

When heavy marbles of rain are the hissing gossip's theme;
And then at the smell of the wet dust moved beyond reason,

Moved with an ancient worship, let me worship in my heart;

And so, also, as the sky splits along its eastern seam

In the flushed summer at five o'clock in the morning
When the sun upon talon-tips springs onto the forested bowl,

Complicating the already complicated spiders' webs, adorning

Them with the complications of his tiger-colored beam;
Or when a night grows goblin'd by an instantaneous owl;

Or when, at noon, an apparently artificial backdrop of ranges

Of mountains, clear, hard, inorganic, and remote,
Dances to life at the slithering of a cloud-shade, changes

From a land beyond loving to an Eden, given a soul
By one feather of immaculate moisture perilously afloat,

A temporary nimbus over a converted region
Where the streams now are loquacious, the trees subject to whim,

Where little songs and sorties among the bushes are legion,

And the rock is a tambourine for the feet of the goat;
Or when, in the evening, on the hushed seashore, the dim
Evening dimly welds the pale sands to the pale ocean,
And the faint knocking of the breaking wavelets is soon
unheard,

While in the air a hovering of silence is all the motion
And among the farther waters only teeming silences
swim. . . .

* * *

But these are simply casual impressions, called, by a word,
Or a shape, or a smell, or some uncertain thread of
association,

Back into the mystery of one all but insignificant mind;
Which cannot grasp the notion of the residue of creation,
From the animus which inhabits to the outermost skies
which gird—

The creation wherein man preys upon his own kind,
And upon the beasts; and the beasts also prey upon
each other,

And upon man; in every time and in every place:
Where what devours enriches, what rots enlivens; ever
another

Day after night, another birth after death; ever behind
Summer shall autumn drop, behind winter shall spring
chase,

As Africa chases Asia for ever around the equator,
And the whole world for ever chases the moon around
the sun.

I can only constantly adore the unthinkable Creator,
Who abides in the heart of the flea, Who wheels in space,
Who endlessly continues what has been endlessly begun,
Until His will shall have been done.

III.

To consider God as one stares giddily at the starred sky
Is instinctive, and both in time and in place universal;
The celestial circuits stagger one's mind into a shame,

Only capable of a more or less mechanical rehearsal
Of one's sense of insignificance and of being about to die.
But I say that to be burdened with this awe is to proclaim
The very splendor of man, by which his look may be
lifted

From the prostrate shadow to the tower's circumference;
For man is miserable precisely because he is gifted,
And the measure of his infamy serves also to measure his
fame.

Thus when, during the intervals of his inept violence,
His meditations concern themselves with the unlimited
pavilion

Which is imperial upon him whether he regards it or not,
And each sees himself as one among many a million
Two-legged worries bickering wistfully hence—

Then let the agitations, which bedevil him and besot,
Perish in a pride at possessing even such a vision;
For of all the made mysteries only man has inward eyes,
And only man harbors simultaneously both unity and
division

And can symbolize complexity in the grace of the gavotte.

Therefore let me constantly adore the manifestations, in
any guise,

Of the mystery working through the minds and hands
of people:

Whether in the simple purposefulness of a fisherman's net,
Or in the elegant aspiration of a tapered steeple,
Or in the international language of lullabies,
Or in the varying rituals in which we are born and we
beget,

The making of works of art out of natural urges,
The touching of lips, the removal of hats, the shaking
of hands—

Any at all of the telling symbols in which emerges
A hankering for order from the jumbled everyday
alphabet;

Any of the skills by which the seemingly fortuitous strands
Of experience are loomed into satisfying traditions,
Wherein man is ever childish, and ever childishly sage,
Hanging silver balls on fir trees, brazen bells on
missions,

And perpetuating bountiful ecstasies in reticent sarabands.
Let us constantly adore, in however disheartening an age,
The inconceivable Maker of the inconceivable but daily
Augmented procession of inconceivable man.

The shadows are our own: let our hearts rise gaily;
For the turmoil which unmakes us, the abandon, the
ethic rage,

The hunger for assertion which frenzies the partizan,
The nausea making us pious, the fear making us
aggressive—

These are the reverse of the obverse: but the coin is still
of gold;

And the identical passions are equally expressive
Of the celestial quickening by which our kind began.

Let us now remember what a noble river of music rolled
From the vast intellectual brow of an otherwise peasant-
Faced, snubnosed, deaf, and uncouth mortal, a stream

Now coarsely boisterous, now pellucidly pleasant,
Now sad with all the sorrows ever told or left untold;
And let us remember every figment of the too, too solid
dream

Which is populated with such palpitating creatures
That history is outdone, and which was thin air, before
A provincial from by the Avon, with slightly foolish
features,

Set out to make a living and to bolster his self-esteem.
These let us remember; let us remember a thousand more;
Let us ever be aware of millions whom we cannot
remember

Because we have never heard of them: their vision is
our eyes.

Let the winds of emulation fan the ashy ember
Till flowers of flame decorate the holy and hidden core;
For, that the core is within us, all perception testifies,
And the core is always holy however unclean its
raiment.

The light has been given us: let each give back his light.

Whatever the nature or the extent of the repayment
The cowardly and reprehensible shall gleam with the
just and the wise,

If only each, keeping a corner of his own darkness bright,
 Liberal in responses, deliberately living,
 Improvident in acceptance, ashamed only to shun,
 Constantly adore the unthinkable Creator, constantly
 giving

Adoration throughout the daytime, and trust during the
 night
 That His pulse is in each of us, though His will be in none;
 And that His will shall be done.
 ALASTAIR W. R. MILLER.

The United States In Retrospect

Impressions after a seven
 months' lecture tour

J. L. Benvenuti

I BELIEVE that the man who does not like America has got something wrong with him. I believe that such a man is fundamentally a bad man. There are unlovely aspects in American life, as there are unlovely aspects in the life of every country in the world, but there is a fundamental simplicity and goodness in the people of America, and a man's ability to savor and be moved by that is a pretty good test of the values which govern his life.

One thing that startled and delighted me more than anything else was the impact on my mind of the Middle West, and one of the results of my tour is that I have, I think, learned a more reasonable evaluation of that phenomenon to which Europeans invariably allude with a sort of contemptuous sneer: namely, Mid-Western isolationism. It seems to me that this is a case of the pot calling the kettle black, or rather of a very black kettle making an observation about a pot that is not so black at all. We are always calling the Middle West provincial, because it is insufficiently interested in the affairs of Europe. It seems to occur to nobody that it is very provincial of Europe to be unconcerned about the affairs of the Middle West. Most mid-westerners have some notion of what Paris and Oxford stand for, but to the average Englishman, even to the average educated Englishman, Chicago suggests nothing but meat packing and gangsters. I state quite seriously that ninety-nine Englishmen out of a hundred, and ninety-nine point nine English women, are quite ignorant of the fact that Chicago is the seat of two great universities, at least one of which is as important as any in the world.

Now the Middle West is essentially one of the great river civilizations of mankind, and I believe that the beginning of wisdom is to cease to think of it as a place vaguely at the back of New York, but to let one's mind's eye turn its inhabitants around, so to speak, so that one sees them facing towards their natural centers—toward the Great Lakes, towards America's second greatest port,

that of Duluth, and toward the great Father of Waters, the Mississippi. One must see them as a people who have deliberately founded a new civilization on these great and natural *points d'appui*, founded it on a terrain which was itself a sort of world beyond the worlds.

To understand the spirit of the Midwest I think the European should forget that by an excellent train service he can get very speedily to Chicago, Minneapolis or to any other place in this region. He must feel that the real approach is from the North, and that there is not one ocean but two that separate the mid-western from the old world. "Go across the sea to America," I hear some ancient mentor saying. "Go forward till you come to a great inland sea as big as the Mediterranean, stuck by some inexplicable enchantment in the middle of a continent, and there beyond those waters of the twilight is your land of heart's desire, your ultimate Savannah where you can build a good life."

This idea of building the good life and, having at last got to the hard-won place where it is possible, of setting a wall around that place in order to do that building unmolested, is, I think, subconsciously in every mid-western mind, and very strongly in the minds of many of the Catholic clergy; and now that I have seen what I have seen, I understand very well why many Catholic priests feel this way.

Against the thousand things which delighted and stimulated me in America, I must set one item very mildly on the debit side, simply because this is something by which the lives of millions of Europeans may be affected. The American mind is less analytical, less devoted than the European to correlating cause and effect for the mere fun of the thing. It is not that the American mind is in any way inferior to the European. It is an essentially practical mind and has the defects of its virtues. I record this matter, therefore, not as a fault but simply as a fact.

Now unfortunately, one of the effects of this

essentially unanalytical character of the American mind is that Americans to a quite marked degree fail to analyze themselves and to examine the causes which have made them what they are. Though a profoundly humble people—humility is I believe the characteristic American virtue—they tend to exaggerate the purely moral causes of their success and to under-rate the element of circumstances and pure luck.

For instance, I am surprised by the number of educated Americans I have met who are quite unconscious of the effect of mere geographical accident in the making of their nation. Although you cannot, of course, explain American history purely in terms of geography or any other material factor, yet can anyone doubt that the part that these factors played was an enormous one? Whenever I have a bath now, I draw the soap dish along the surface of the water and say, "There is the greatness of America." I mean by this that the existence of a thousand miles of seaboard accessible from England at a relatively short distance (as ocean distances go) by what has always been the cheapest and most convenient form of transport enabled a huge stock of capital to be built up on the American side, and this in its turn provided a superb springboard for the penetration of the interior. There is no doubt about it in the bowels of various American universities professors who have worked all this out with a soul-shattering wealth of statistical erudition, but I met an astonishing number of Americans to whom this idea seemed novel and even fascinating in its novelty.

But I can make my point better in yet another way. I suppose there is nothing more obvious in America, and nothing more frequently commented on, than the genuine egalitarian spirit in that country. Not only are all men, at least all white men, very truly felt to be equal, but they have a remarkable tendency to re-attain equality very quickly when any factor such as sudden wealth has temporarily disturbed it. Americans have often dwelt to me with obvious pride on the phenomenon of "shirt sleeves to shirt sleeves in three generations," and they have with a surprising consistency ascribed this to every cause but the real one. They have, for instance, commented with fine patriotic fervor on the reckless pioneering "Klondike or bust" spirit, that is still supposed to prevail among the American people (an essentially traditional nation, so far as I have been able to discover, and one addicted to pedantic courtesy and punctilio) and other explanations, which have all been of a purely moral character, have been equally wide of the mark. It is a fact that in the numerous conversations I have had with Americans on this subject, no one has once mentioned the word primogeniture; yet it is certainly the presence of primogeniture in

Britain and its absence in America that accounts more than any other single factor for the profound difference of tone between the two societies.

There is a kind of conspiracy between our two nations to refuse to recognize this fact, because Americans like to believe that all differences are due to their own superior virtue and so tend to reject a merely mechanistic explanation, and the British have vested interest in pretending that there are no real differences at all. I know that this last is true because I have, more or less unconsciously, played that hand myself. For instance, when I was asked, as happened once or twice at high schools, "Why do you have a Royal Family?" I sometimes gave the painfully obvious answer which is, of course: "Largely for the benefit of the United States." More often, however, I have the more pedantic and orthodox explanation, which is that the Royal Family is a genuinely popular institution, that, despite what some Americans think, it is a very cheap one too, that every state has a figurehead of some kind, etc.—the upshot of this, the standard defence of British Royalty, being that British Royalty is a sort of amiable irrelevancy and does not imply any radical difference between the spiritual outlook of our two peoples or the character of their states.

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I am, however, beginning to think that the instinct of the high school boy who asks this question is a very sound one and that he is wiser in his generation than his elders. I am beginning to think that British Royalty so far from being something unimportant, is something very important indeed, in so far as it is the symbol of this very principle of primogeniture, of which I have been speaking. Frankly I do not think that the effects of this institution and of its absence in the United States, are anything like sufficiently appreciated. True, its main consequence in Britain, the preservation of great estates, is disappearing under the positively vindictive application of death duties, and in this way we are coming nearer to America, where it is of course precisely the absence of this law of primogeniture that has caused great fortunes to be dispersed. But the spirit of primogeniture still remains in Britain. Take for instance one very important British fact—the relatively high age of our company directors. People remain in harness longer in responsible business positions, because, despite death duties, it still means something to be head of a wealthy family. For even today the head of a family represents continuity, and there is a sort of tradition in some concerns that a director when he dies shall be succeeded by his son. Many say that this kind of thing makes for stagnation and inefficiency, and it may well be that it does. But

that only proves my point, which is that in both Britain and America it is something mechanical and not wholly some trait of character or some tenet of philosophy that shapes our destinies.

It is, of course, true that moral factors create the institution and that the institution strengthens those traits of character out of which it arises. Primogeniture was abolished in America for moral and philosophic reasons, and its absence has helped to create a moral outlook of a very distinctive kind, but that does not alter the fact that the cause which makes for American egalitarianism is mechanical quite as much as it is moral, and my whole point is that Americans often tend to miss this fact about themselves. That is why so much of their thinking about other people is informed by a naïve "Why don't they do as we do?" whereas in most cases (as in the case of primogeniture) people cannot "do as we do" unless they miraculously telescope a century of history, and so within a few months bring about a result which it has taken generations to achieve. And all too often people cannot "do as we do" simply because circumstances prevent them from doing anything of the kind.

And that brings me to what is perhaps the most noteworthy, and for us Europeans the most disturbing, feature in the American make-up: the absence in the American scheme of things of any place for failure. I do not mean the "if at first you don't succeed, try, try again" kind of failure, because that is only a delayed action success story. I mean ultimate and complete failure, failure brought about by the ineluctable decree of circumstances, tragic failure.

The American worship of the success story has often been commented upon, and personally I think it is in many ways a lovable and inspiring feature of the American character. The trouble is that the Americans want a success story not only in their plays and books and films, where I confess I rather like it, but they want history to be a success story because their own history happens almost outrageously to have been just that—and history is rarely a success story, nor does it lose beauty or dignity or meaning from its failure to be one.

Now all this makes me as a European very afraid and in particular it makes me afraid for the near future, because I believe there may be unhappy repercussions when the Marshall Plan fails as it most certainly will fail to give Americans what they want. I do not by that mean that the Marshall Plan will fail altogether in its objects. I do not think it will. If it does nothing else, it will almost certainly save Europe from utter collapse, and if it does that it will be the only thing in the world that could have done it. But even so it will not give the Americans what in their secret hearts they want to get out of it.

For this nation of Shylocks still wants its pound of flesh and what the Americans want out of the Marshall Plan is again—a success story, and that is just what they are not going to get.

What the Americans want and, I believe (such is the American character) want quite selfishly, is to see Europe thriving and prosperous—not quite up to the American prosperity, perhaps, because that would almost hurt America's *amour propre*. After all what is the point of being an American when Europe can beat you at your own game? But they certainly want us to come somewhere near to the American standard, and Europe has not a chance of doing anything of the kind.

For the brutal fact of the matter, which hardly anybody at the moment will recognize, is that Europe has been defeated, and the consequences of that defeat will take generations to remedy and may perhaps never be remedied at all. If it is objected that the word defeat is too strong a term, I ask what other term is to be used? When as a result of combination of force and fraud you are denied by another Power access to territories on which your whole economy depends and you do nothing because there is nothing you can do, then defeat is the only word that is applicable, and it is this word and this word alone which describes what has happened to Europe, and Europe of course includes Britain.

Most Americans still seem to think that Europe is in difficulties because its countries were knocked about a little bit in the War and simply want aid in order to reorganize themselves on a peacetime basis and that this is what the Marshall Plan is designed to help them do. But that is not the root of the European trouble at all. The root of the trouble is the shutting down of the supplies that once came from Europe and the Far East. That is the deep-rooted cancer that is eating the life out of the European economy and, so far as supplies from Eastern Europe are concerned, there is, thanks to the growing populations in that part of the world and to the military force which continues to be used to protect their interests, no remedy whatever in sight.

To that situation Europe must somehow or another adjust itself. And that adjustment cannot be other than long, painful and difficult. It may take generations, it may never succeed at all, and all the intervening period cannot be other than a desperate hand to mouth existence in which we shall repeatedly fail to honor our commitments, not because we are reckless or irresponsible people but because the pressure of circumstance will make it impossible for us to do otherwise.

That is not the kind of picture that even the most generous and well-disposed Americans have in mind, and I am wondering rather anxiously what they will say and do when they become disillusioned.

Germany, 1948

Incidents taken from German Press and Letters

Lewis A. Coser

Of Calories and Death

(1) "The most beautiful day of my life was February 17, 1947, when my brother died and I inherited his overcoat, his shoes and his woolen jacket." This answer was given by a 12-year old girl asked in a Nuernberg school to write a composition on "The Most Beautiful Day of My Life."

(2) "The Berlin Criminal Court today dealt with the case of the 45-year old coal-delivery worker Erich Kramer who was accused of murder. The accused had killed his colleague Paul Moeller at their common place of work, using an iron bar for the act. The motive: he wanted Moeller's ration book.

"The men had worked together for a long time. They usually had their lunch together in a certain room of the enterprise. When Moeller one day inspected his new ration book before the eyes of Kramer, the latter asked him to let him look at the book for a minute. Later on the two again worked together in the coal dealers' cellar; Kramer now conceived of the idea to kill his colleague in order to get hold of the ration book. With an iron bar he hit M. over the head while the latter bent over to shovel some coal; then took the ration book and 200 Marks from the dead man and fled.

"The accused alleged that he had acted out of hunger, had lost his own ration book and had only eaten two pieces of bread that day. The prosecutor asked for the death penalty but the court decided upon 12 years of hard labor."

(3) "Last week Mrs. Schuett, 39 years old, and her mother, 82 years old, committed suicide by opening the gas main in their apartment. They had lost their ration cards."

(4) "More than a hundred children," said the people of Krefeld to each other, "have disappeared from the city and have been made into sausage for the black market. Only their bones have still been found in various parks." Teachers warned their pupils and parents warned their children not to go unaccompanied into the streets. Sausage and meat in butcher shops and on the black market suddenly became unsaleable, so that the city administration finally was forced to issue an official statement that the rumor was not based on fact.

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Children For Sale

(5) "Little four-year old Monica could not be found. For four days and nights her parents searched in vain. Finally the police were able to discover the child and return her to the parents.

"The 25-year old Irmgard Ruediger one day abducted the child from the kindergarten. Some time ago she had stated to the police that she was the mother of a little girl Monica; the police had believed her story and had issued her a ration book for her 'daughter.' But Irmgard was rather nervous lest the fact that she had no daughter be detected. When she met little Monica one day she decided that the best would be to steal her and to take her to her apartment. The accused was condemned to 1 year in prison."

(6) The train from Berlin to Hanover in the British Zone is overcrowded as usual. At the British-Russian borderline in Marienborn everybody has to leave the train and stand in an endless queue to get the interzonal stamp which is necessary to cross from one zone into the other. The procedure takes about 3 hours, if one is lucky. But the Russians give priority to women with children who can find nice warm seats in the outgoing train while latecomers find standing room only or have to hang on to the outside railings of the train. I now saw how a little girl of about five changed her mother four times: she crossed and recrossed the way from the control post to the waiting train. A woman standing next to me explained that the little service costs only 30 Marks. What do you want—30 Marks, that is five cigarettes, and that is quite a lot nowadays. A child for 30 Marks.

Barter, Barter unto Death

(7) Certificates of marriage and death will be issued in the town of Muenster only if the applicant turns in 200 to 500 grams of waste paper. If you have no waste paper, you are not marriageable and cannot die officially, as far as the town of Muenster is concerned.

(8) "A former pupil of mine," writes a friend, "daughter of a minister, wanted to study medicine. But that is most difficult. There are quite a number of unemployed doctors right now and access to the medical schools is most restricted. 'No,' she was told, 'we don't admit anyone, fur-

thermore we don't dispose of enough scientific equipment nor do we have enough corpses.' 'Do I get into the school if I bring you corpses?' asked the maiden. When the answer was affirmative she induced her father, a prison minister, to work on the parents of the inmates who die in his prison. Since then the girl brings the corpses on a wagon from almost 100 kilometers distance . . . but she can study medicine."

Multilateral Trade

(9) The mayor of Stuttgart recently asked permission to import cigarettes from the French Zone to complete a deal for cement. The cigarettes were to be obtained for cognac and were to be shipped to a Ruhr mining concern that would deliver coal. The coal was to be used to get cement. After the agreement had been reached, the Economic Office refused permission on the ground that the Ruhr Company had no business swapping cigarettes for coal. Stuttgart is still short of cement.

(10) "My friend wanted to leave for a vacation. So he went to a newspaper stand and bought two copies of the 'History of the City of Rethem,' four volumes 'Wild Vegetables, Fruits and Herbs,' two 'In Praise of Work.' He weighed the volumes and then still bought five 'Tax Calculations for City Administration,' four 'Historical Roots of German Imperialism,' and 15 copies of various magazines. The news dealer looks rather astonished but my friend gladly paid 26 Marks for his bulky package of printed matter. . . . Ten minutes later he entered a leather-goods shop. 'A suitcase, please.' Then, with the most natural air of the world, he placed his newly found paper treasures on the counter: 'Six pounds!' He got his suitcase and payed 11 Marks 40 Pfennig. There was a little sign over the counter reading: 'Suitcases only against delivery of 6 pounds of waste paper'."

Negative Reproduction

(11) It was impossible recently to find money order blanks in many Bavarian post offices. Money transfers certainly had not increased in recent times. What had happened to the many thousands of blanks? The waste-paper dealer gave the answer: people need urgently certain things made of paper but they get them only against return of waste paper. It is difficult to gather enough newspapers, these being exceedingly thin, and the purchase of magazines makes the operation too expensive. What do the clever German housewives do? They buy thousands of money order blanks for a nominal fee.

(12) There is not enough simple wrapping paper, so one has to use expensive form paper. There is no paper for the wrapping of home-grown cigarettes—so flimsy disappears from the

offices. There are not enough matches—so thousands of families let their gas burn day and night. Industry now produces so-called lighters, the manufacture of which requires more material than would ever have been used for matches.

(13) Window glass is scarce, so many tuberculars cannot be X-rayed because the glass for the plates is now being used for windows. Rubber plates which are in great demand by chemical firms are used for shoe soles. The water runs for days on end over a little piece of butter to keep it fresh. Farmers don't get enough binder twine because housewives have discovered that they can knit dusters with it. . . . And thus one scarcity breeds another in an unending chain of economic lunacy.

Of Love and Living

(14) The marriage market is completely distorted since there are many million more women than men. The complicated means by which females hope to attract the desired male are pitiful and ludicrous. In an ad, a widow with a child offers an undestroyed house as the main bait to a bombed-out male. Butchers and bakers command a high premium on the marriage market. Here as everywhere feelings are overborne by necessities.

(15) The official ration leads to sexual impotence, here again the black market is the only salvation. Those who cannot get any additional food lose their sexual power. A girl student who decides for a liaison with a displaced person who possesses additional ration cards, is of the opinion that love with a really beloved partner will have to wait until after the currency reform.

(16) Recently Dr. E. A. Jenny of the American Military Government in Bavaria received letters from seven German men who offered to yield an eye to help blinded American soldiers. An investigation disclosed that a rumor had been spread that \$2,000 and a job awaited any German who would give one eye. It seems that someone perpetuated a hoax.

(17) Professor Dr. Rudolf Paulsen, formerly professor of pre-history at Erlangen University, was found by the police to have hoarded, among other things, the following items: About 300 meters of various kinds of fabric, 76 pairs of gloves, 300 pieces of soap, 56 tooth brushes, 132 packages of cleanser, 2 bags of flour, 200 pounds of sugar, 54 sausages, 150 bottles of wine and liquor, 60 cans of meat, 250 eggs, 40 pounds of fat, 19 pounds of tea, 12 pounds of coffee.

(18) Little girls sit in a park and nibble at some blossoms. "But these blossoms may be poisonous." "So what; we are hungry." Children hunt for fodder.

(19) A new kind of sickness has made its appearance in Berlin recently. There are already

several hundred cases. Medical authorities have no clear picture as yet of the causes and the character of the illness, but it is known that the symptoms are the same as those observed among beggars in China. It is surmised that the cause is most probably to be found in the too frequent eating of wild plants.

(20) Siam, the only Berlin elephant to survive the war, died last year. Now a zoo attendant has been brought into a German court charged with stealing and selling a twenty-pound slice of Siam at an excessive price, 400 Marks.

(21) The dump where the refuse from American headquarters is being disposed of is always surrounded by men, women and even children. They go through the refuse armed with a piece of metal or wood to discover the still valuable remnants of the American standard of living. "We look above all for anything that can be used as fuel," says a woman, "but we also take everything else that can be used. Americans never squeeze the last drop out of their shaving cream and toothpaste; orange and grapefruit peels make excellent soup, and from time to time one can even find a half-finished pack of cigarettes."

Stifled by Forms

(22) If an industrialist wants to export goods from Germany today, he needs to make out 46 forms of nine different categories. In addition to the applications that he has to send to 8 different administrative offices, he still must make out an export contract in two languages and on 4 forms; after this there is a so-called "formless export demand" which has to be made out in two copies only and in German and English.

(23) The daily life of a Berlin citizen is papered with forms and permits. It isn't sufficient that he wants to live; he still has to prove it by some official paper. Without his internal passport he is not himself, even in his home. If he goes to a dance he has to carry a health certificate in his pocket, lest he might be picked up in one of the frequent police raids. If he is an artist and dreams of going to one of the artists' hangouts, he first has to prove his occupation by a special permit certifying officially that he is really a "producer of culture," as it is quaintly called. If he wants to get into his office or into his workshop he needs a house permit. The opening of a cosmetics shop cannot take place without a certificate of political reliability, and a vacation trip without a special permit is as risky for the Berliner as an illegal hoarding hike. Many Berliners go to work not so much for the remuneration as for the work permit, and they would rather lose a tooth than their vaccination certificate. For textiles and shoes, the Berliner needs a union certificate; for railroad tickets he needs a travel permit; for a visit to the barter market,

his work permit; to become a magician a license. To lose one's family certificate means to lose rights to special food allowances. Those who have a little house and garden in the suburb need a special gardening permit.

Premium on Right Thinking

(24) On July 13, there was a membership meeting of the Socialist Unity Party of Schildow-Moenchsmuehle in the Russian Zone. The meeting was followed by a dance during which new members were recruited. Every new member was promised 2 loaves of bread and 10 pounds of potatoes. Twenty-five applied for membership.

(25) Well-known politicians, editors, journalists of the Soviet Zone receive regularly so-called Stalin-food-packages for good behavior. People who frequent the Russian authorities are rewarded also for punctual service by good apartments, allocation of rare goods, travel permits, cars, etc. It pays to think right.

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Germany today is a huge wasteland, a land in which the ordinary categories of morality and of human intercourse which we long took for granted no longer apply. In the insane world of black-market and barter transactions, all those who cannot adapt themselves to the new conditions are pitilessly rooted out, just as they were destroyed in the concentration camp. Death is the penalty for lack of adaptability. Those who maintain the old standards of morality must die; they are no longer fit; no one can subsist on official rations for any length of time.

Max Planck died in a dingy furnished room, miserable, without resources; a number of leading professors are now in hospitals with hunger edema, but Max Mueller, black-marketeer, is now at the top of the social pyramid.

All those who can barter and trade are worth something, those who cannot had better die. The administration which attempts to regulate the unregulatable is leading a strange ghost life, devising ever new forms, ever new bureaucratic methods, but what is to be regulated evades its grasp. Bureaucratic management becomes a sort of "art for art's sake." It is estimated that over 50 percent of the total German industrial production passes through semi-legal and illegal black- and grey-market channels. The proportion of agricultural production which is thus disposed of is probably even higher.

The French novelist, David Rousset, recently wrote a book about his experiences in Nazi concentration camps, entitled "*L'Univers Concentrationnaire*" (the book appeared here under the misleading title, "The Other Kingdom"). Rousset describes the universe of the concentration camps and discovers that, far from containing only two

opposite poles, the victims and the victimizers, it is indeed a world unto itself, governed by particular and specific social rules, moral laws and taboos, a world which may appear absurd to the scientist looking on from the outside but which makes sense within its own framework.

The extreme conditions of the camps help us to awareness of the fact that even our world of today has become increasingly fragmented and that the rules which we once imagined to govern the whole "civilized" world seem to be only partially valid within a much more limited sphere. There exist today several worlds side by side, and it becomes ever more difficult to understand their mode of functioning from the outside. Present-day Germany is, perhaps, the outstanding case in point. A land where a young boy who opens the doors of AMG cars earns considerably more in one day than his father—a skilled worker, or a university professor—earns in a month; a land in which an art exhibition cannot be held because there are no nails to hang the frames on, represents, obviously, a different universe. This land is not ruled by reason, libido, economics, but by calories.

Communications

SPRING BOOK ISSUE

Northampton, Mass.

TO the Editors: Congratulations on an uncommonly good issue (May 14). The new column Catholic International News fulfils a crying need; more power to it! Rest of material well suited to interests of COMMONWEAL readers, and book notes excellent. Whoever "done" the "well-known Greek conversationalist" (p. 112) was surely inspired!

W. A. O.

BIG FARM STRIKE

TO the Editors: The editors of COMMONWEAL are to be commended for publishing the article on the Di Giorgio strike by Ernesto Galarza in last week's issue. This strike of 1,100 members of the National Farm Labor Union-AFL against the huge industrialized Di Giorgio Fruit Corporation ranch has important implications for the labor movement and for human rights which have received all too little attention until now.

Readers of Mr. Galarza's article will be particularly interested to learn of a very important recent development in the strike. On the night of May 17th, James B. Price, President of Local 218, National Farm Labor Union, and a leader of the eight month long Di Giorgio strike, was critically injured when a fusillade of shots was fired into the home of a union member during a meeting of the strike committee over which he was presiding. As in the more publicized near assassination of Walter Reuther, the assailants have not been found. However, Governor Warren, acting at the request of President William Green of the American Federation of Labor

and many others, has ordered a full investigation by California's Attorney General Fred Howser. In ordering the investigation, Governor Warren issued the following statement: "It obviously was an attempt at assassination. Such diabolical acts call for the full force of the law being brought to bear against those who are responsible for them. I have therefore requested the attorney general to make a complete investigation of the crime and to assist the sheriff and the district attorney in every way possible, and report the results of the investigation to me."

Meanwhile the need for support of the Di Giorgio strikers, who have been carrying on their valiant struggle for the simple right to organize and bargain collectively with their employers for 8 months, is greater now than ever before. This committee is collecting funds for the relief of the 1,100 strikers and their families. Contributions may be sent to me at Room 905, 112 East 19th Street, New York 3, N. Y.

JOHN HAYNES HOLMES, *Chairman,*
Citizens Committee on the
Di Giorgio Strike.

ROOSEVELT AND THE COMING OF THE WAR!

New Orleans, La.

TO the Editors: I have just read the silliest book review in the COMMONWEAL that I have ever encountered. It was the review of Charles Beard's "Roosevelt and the Coming of the War." The reviewer's sole point was that since Mr. Beard does not like some of Mr. Roosevelt's methods, he is not qualified to write history on the subject. Am I to understand that one must like Mr. Roosevelt's methods in order to be a qualified historian?

If the reviewer disagreed with Mr. Beard's conclusions he should have opposed them with facts, since Beard's argument was extraordinarily well documented. It is not enough to say that a lot of people in foreign countries considered Mr. Roosevelt a great president, and that therefore Mr. Beard is a sorehead.

WALKER PERCY.

"FRANCOIS MAURIAC"

Davenport, Iowa.

TO the Editors: Unless Vivian Mercier, in his review of Elsie Pell's "Francois Mauriac: In Search of the Infinite," in your May 21 issue, has proof to the contrary, I shall unreasonably insist on the following as the *locus* to which Mauriac's title alludes:

Ah! que n'ai je mis bas tout un noeud de vipères. . .

"Bénédiction," Ch. Baudelaire, "Fleurs du mal," édition définitive, Paris, Calmann-Lévy, Page 3, stanza two, line one.

THE REVEREND WILLIAM J. KERRIGAN.

Whether the noeud de vipères is in Racine or not, it certainly is in Baudelaire. The Free Gift Subscription goes to Father Kerrigan who beat Donald A. Gallagher of Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, by a day in this race of erudition.—THE EDITORS.

The Screen

Where Men Are Men

PERHAPS it's because I'm looking forward to a vacation in Colorado in a couple of weeks, or perhaps it's because outdoor films offer such good opportunity for movement in cinema—in any case I find myself more interested than usual in a group of new movies with locales that make us city cliff dwellers long for the open spaces.

The plot of "*Green Grass of Wyoming*," stemming from Mary O'Hara's novel, isn't quite up to "Flicka" and "Thunderhead," but it is nicely carried on by Peggy Cummins, Charles Coburn and young Robert Arthur in the leads, and it won't by any means bore you. The picture's decorations, however, are better than any travel folder. Burl Ives, singing some of his earthy ballads, appeals to the ear, while gorgeous western scenery in excellent technicolor will bring that far-away look to your eyes and make you wonder how you can stand a summer in canyons of brick.

"*Under California Stars*" is pretty slim on plot too. In fact its story about Roy Rogers and Trigger, his horse who is stolen by a gang of unconvincing villains, has been designed too obviously for children. But the shots of California, under sun or stars, will keep you from getting restless while people do the silly and mean things they do.

John Ford has turned his first-rate directorial talents to another outdoors drama, a rather corny affair about post-Civil War soldiers in conflict with Indians. Director Ford struggled valiantly with this story that is no better than any found in B westerns, but he had an outstanding cast to work with and he knows how to make a stagecoach crossing an Arizona desert (with mesas in the background of course) seem even more exciting than battle sequences. Henry Fonda portrays the fort's commanding officer, a martinet whose book learning doesn't help him win the big fight with the Apaches who slaughter the helpless soldiers in a massacre scene that is even more gory than the famous saloon picture of Custer's Last Stand. "*Fort Apache*" contrasts effectively its brave soldiers (John Wayne, Pedro Armendariz, Ward Bond, George O'Brien, Victor McLaglen, etc., etc.), with the girls and wives they leave behind in the fort (Shirley Temple, Anna Lee, Irene Rich, etc., etc.). Long after you've forgotten this story with its into-the-valley-of-death-rode-the-600 theme, you'll remember the stunning views of Arizona.

"*Fury at Furnace Creek*" starts right out with an Apache massacre in Arizona, and then spends the rest of its footage telling about two brothers who devote themselves to vindicating their father's name. One of the brothers is good (Glenn Langan) and the other is bad (Victor Mature). Any movie fan will know in advance that the bad brother will prove to be the better man. He does—after some tough fisticuffs involving villain Albert Dekker and his weak accomplice Reginald Gardner. At times Director Bruce Humberstone allows

his cast to talk too much for this kind of an action picture, but there's always the magnificent scenery to console you and a lot of tough guys at whom you can give vent to any pent-up anger.

"*Four Faces West*" has an unusual twist to its plot in that Joel McCrea portrays an outlaw whom U. S. Marshal, Charles Bickford, considers a bank bandit. Joel insists he only "borrowed" the money and before he turns himself in, he goes through a series of adventures in New Mexico that are done with more realism than is ordinary in a western thriller. Lovely Frances Dee and Joseph Calleia have much to do with Joel's change of heart. It is a treat to see this kind of an outdoor drama in which the villains are few and the hero has enough solid foundation to withstand adversity that seems to be driving him along evil paths.

Errol Flynn makes little attempt to resist temptation after fate plays a dirty trick on him at the close of the Civil War. He goes west and becomes the typical movie heel who's out for himself alone. Even Ann Sheridan, who has battled with Errol through six or seven reels, has some difficulty in reforming him in time for the finale. It is surprising that Raoul Walsh, who has directed some excellent westerns, should have made such a tedious, verbose job out of this one. Stephen Longstreet's story isn't much of a help, but usually Walsh can overcome a bad plot and give us characterization and scenery that satisfy. "*Silver River*" has practically nothing to recommend it.

Perhaps the best of all these new outdoor inspirations is "*The Dude Goes West*," a satire on all of moviedom's wild and woolly films. Eddie Albert is excellent as a gunsmith whose bookish background sends him to Nevada to seek fame and fortune. Everything happens to Eddie, including Indians, tough hombres, and a girl with a map to a mine that the villains covet. It isn't the story that is so remarkable in this picture so much as the amusing burlesque of the usual movie conception of the west. Kurt Neumann has directed the piece for fun and thrills. He succeeds in all departments; and you may find yourself approaching all horse operas with tongue in cheek. However even the bad westerns provide a form of escape for city folk or modern man.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Books

The Journals of André Gide. Vol. II, 1914-1927. Knopf. \$3.00. The Diaries of Franz Kafka 1910-1913. Schocken. \$3.75. Letters of Rainer Maria Rilke. Vol. II, 1910-1926. Norton. \$5.00.

NOW, IN mid-twentieth century, the contours of our age are beginning to take shape. Across the anguish of two wars and two tremendous revolutions, we see a few writers, men like trees walking. By luck, or good management, three of the giants are come close to us this year: in the Journals of Gide, the Diaries of Kafka and the Letters of Rilke we can see, writ large, the history of every European, the tragedy of Europe,

and the grandeur and misery of all mankind. To meditate these three books is, for anyone who writes or thinks or feels, as watching a slow-motion film of Carnera's greatest fight would be for a kid boxer: it's not just seeing Shelley plain, its learning exactly how that hook comes about, that punch is followed through.

How picayune, how petty are such entries as "I am losing the inner connection with my nature, and this condition leads to a silentness inwardly and outwardly, to an insensibility of which I daily complain and which I still cannot overcome" (Rilke). June 21: "The anxiety I suffer from all sides. 1. Digestion. 2. Neurasthenia. 3. Rash. 4. Inner insecurity." Nov. 21 " . . . When I picked up the ink well from the desk to carry it into the living room I felt a sort of firmness in me" (Kafka). "Tuesday morning: Again black torpor in the middle of the day; and at night discouraging insomnia. . . . Last night was a bit better (frightful anguish the night before)" (Gide). And yet it is from these insecurities, of these self-centered agonies, of these imagined torments, that literature is created, as a child grows in the womb's water and feeds on menstrual blood. Kafka's *The Castle*, Rilke's *Malte Lauris Brigge*, Gide's *Les Faux Monnayeurs*, three masterpieces: and here are the conditions surrounding their composition, as darkness and the death hour surround all earthly life and love.

Comparing and contrasting these three, one is struck again and again by the unity and the diversity of human character. Gide is a Frenchman, Rilke was a German, Kafka a Czech; Gide is a Protestant; Rilke was a Catholic, and Kafka a Jew. And yet, these three differing traditions, these three disciplines, these three ways in and ways out, have basic, fundamental likenesses, that in uniting them, mark them as eternally separate from those of a Whitman, or a Tagore. Europe, at the Gide-Rilke-Kafka level, is more one than Mr. Churchill will ever imagine it, or the Marshall plan make it, and to soak in these infinitely personal, intimate books, is to steep oneself in the whole Graeco-Judeo-Christian tradition at its highest possible intellectual expression. Here is the finest flowering of European gardeners, demonstrating the compost, the fertilizers, the chemical composition of the soil in which grew their triumphs.

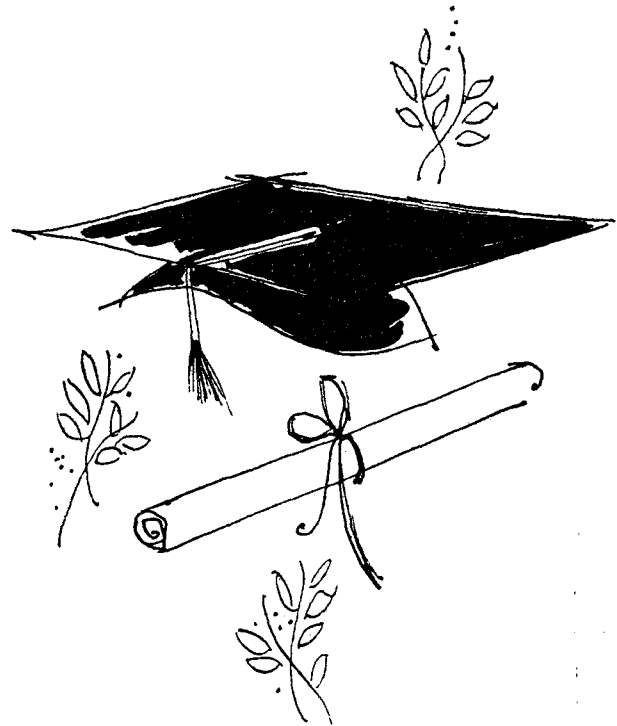
Gide is easily the most balanced, urbane, objective: the most grown-up and the least sensitive. Even when he wrestles with God or with his own sins, he does so almost with the lecture-hall in view: this agony, this fall, may help some fellow-sufferer, may add something to the capital of individual experience, so let's enter it in the account. One has the feeling that his diary is a ledger, and that though he is sometimes surprised at the entries, and at the additions, the total sum is accepted, almost foreseen. He suffers from writer's reluctance (as do also the other two, and how!) but also from the pitiless clarity of that spotlight that is French introspective thought. He is never deceived. "The impossibility of keeping oneself in a state of tension" he notes a month after the outbreak of war "which is after all artificial, as soon as nothing in the immediate surrounding motivates it." And he goes back to playing Bach, and even to preferring the fugues with a joyful rhythm.

And what a chronicler he is: his account of Paris at the beginning of the war, his descriptions of the wounded, his day to day story of his pet starling, his finger-nail sketches etched in vitriol, of Edmund Gosse, so stingy,

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and Paul Bourget, so utterly lacking in literary taste! And Gide's seriousness! Never for a moment is he superficial, whether wrestling with his besetting sin—"Sin is what one does not do freely. Deliver me from that captivity, O Lord"—to reading aloud with the children. His is a wonderfully rounded life—at Cuverville he has his garden, his animals and country pursuits; in Paris, he lives a rich political, social and artistic life amongst friends and foes.

One understands that Goethe should be the figure in history that is most sympathetic to Gide: there is in him also that sense of a vision of all nature offering God the many colored robe men see Him by. Kafka is in many ways, the contrary. His shorthand is so private it sometimes becomes unintelligible: what can one make of the item (a day's entry) "Impressions of Toynbee Hall?" or on May 25 1912. "Weak tempo, little blood?" There is a sorrow that is more than mere melancholy that permeates the book, a sorrow that seems to permeate Jewish literature, and from which individual Jews themselves only seem to escape very rarely. And Kafka seems flattened and mesmerized by this pain: he is passionately Jewish, but at the same time, etiolatedly so: there is an indoor, urban quality about this misery that is interesting to contrast with, say, the no less real welt-schmerz of Hardy, whose heart is heavy with the emptiness of heaths and the hugeness of desolate moors. Or with the melancholia of Rimbaud, whose desert is lit by such alarming 'lightnings His sword.'

Rilke is the most whole, in a multi-dimensional sense. In reading Gide, one feels someone living only here; Kafka is living almost exclusively elsewhere—such of him as lives here, only suffers—whereas Rilke's letters are almost total acceptance: "that taking heavily with which my books are filled, is no heavy-heartedness, it means nothing, does it, but a taking according to true weight, hence according to truth; an attempt to weigh things by the carat of the heart, instead of by suspicion, happiness or chance. No denial, is it? no *denial*; oh, on the contrary, how much infinite assent and still more assent to existence." Here, by contrast, is Kafka's outlook: "One advantage of keeping a diary is that you become aware with reassuring clarity of the changes which you constantly suffer and which in a general way are naturally believed, surmised and admitted by you, but which you unconsciously deny when it comes to the point of gaining hope or peace from such an admission. In the diary you find proof that in situations which today would seem unbearable, you lived. . . ." And Gide: "The best means of learning to know oneself is seeking to understand others."

Gide, Rilke and Kafka were confronted not only with that collapse of Western civilization which we call World War I but, as we all are, by the interior demon of acedia. Their masterpieces are the evidences of their triumph; these three books are dear tokens of their struggle.

Rilke strokes everything, Gide watches, Kafka growls: and o, what almost endless experience is distilled in these three intimate books by these three giants, but the conclusion, for the average reader, is probably stated in Rilke's Duino Elegies.

the free animal
has its decease perpetually behind it
and God in front, and when it moves, it moves
in eternity, like running springs.

ANNE FREMANTLE.

Le Corbusier. Stamo Papadaki. Macmillan. \$7.50.

New World of Space. Le Corbusier. Reynal. \$6.00.

THOSE of us who used to hesitate before planking down fifty dollars a night for a Miami hotel room will doubtless have to think twice these days before racing to the bookstores for the latest offerings from the publishers. Prices have gone up everywhere, as we all know, and books that once cost a trifle now cost a pang. Yet books are books, and the best books are always necessary, no matter if we have to beg or borrow them—the best books, that is.

Since Le Corbusier may well be the greatest architect of our time, one might think that our publishers would do their level best to bring out a distinguished book or two dealing with his ever-fascinating achievements. No such thought, however, seems to have struck the editors of these two new books on the coiner of the slogan: *a house is a machine for living*.

Stamo Papadaki's "Le Corbusier" is little more than a collection of after-dinner speeches by Joseph Hudnut, Siegfried Giedion, Fernand Léger, J. L. Sert, and James Thrall Soby. Perhaps the worst of the lot is Giedion's chat on "Furniture Design and the Common Object." There are foot-notes in the best Germanic tradition, and this reviewer suspects that Giedion writes English with a German dictionary at his elbow. The first sentence may be quoted as an example of Giedion's prose style: "Around 1920 France ranked as a land completely routine-bogged in everything pertaining to the house."

While Papadaki's "Corbusier" is reasonably well illustrated, Le Corbusier's own book "New World Of Space" has the most wretchedly reproduced lot of photographs this reviewer has spotted in many a year. Furthermore, most of the illustrations were none too good to begin with. As for the text itself, it might conceivably be a chapter in a book, but is much too fragmentary for publication as it now stands.

Anyone seriously interested in Le Corbusier will do well to pass these two books up and save his pennies until the day he can afford to buy any one of the four volumes of the master's "Oeuvres Complètes," published by Girsberger of Zurich. Though the "Oeuvres Complètes" sell for around ten dollars a volume, they are definitive—beautifully printed and meticulously edited. Judging by the latest from the Macmillan and Reynal & Hitchcock offices, it will be a long time before New York can compete with Zurich in the matter of architectural literature.

WAYNE ANDREWS.

The Common Chord. Frank O'Connor. Knopf. \$2.75.

Innocents. A. L. Barker. Scribners. \$2.50.

IN FRANK O'CONNOR'S novel, "Dutch Interior," a sardonic fellow urges the reading of Jane Austen. "She's grand and consoling, and there isn't a line in her that'd remind you of anything at all." It hardly needs saying at this late date that every line in Frank O'Connor (and he has as fine a draughtsman's eye for line as Da Vinci) hits the reality of the *Ding an sich*. It's grand too, and oddly consoling, to see in these pages intellect and humor in wry war on sentiment. Of course there's not a "toast" here that could conceivably be uttered anywhere on Saint Patrick's Day; yet O'Connor's eye for Ireland is grimly loyal and committed. For to be without illusion is not to be without love.

"We're *all* disenchanted," says one of Thurber's car-

toon characters. In these stories and tales, O'Connor, omnisciently off-stage, is the only disenchanted being among a score of men and women, the wise and the foolish among them, who hold enchantment and incantation to their hearts. These stories are linked by common illusion: a view of sex the like of which was never on land or sea—save in Ireland. Here is a broad hatful of people who, so far as one subject is concerned, were born yesterday. Nearly everybody in the book is a Manichee *manqué*, hell-bent to hammer Western contours into the Eastern diagrams of Kells. In other hands, those of O'Faolain or Jim Phelan, for example, this theme would turn sour under thesis. But with O'Connor there are pathos, delicate irony, and most of all, roaring humor.

The funniest yarn of all, and it's long enough to be called a novella, is "The Holy Door," the story of the married life of Charlie Cashman, a warm-hearted man who fancied himself as a bit of a Romeo. When Polly Donnegan wanted to go on a pilgrimage to Lourdes for their honeymoon, he should have realized that he'd met more than his match in this slip of a girl who "combined a strong grasp of the truths of religion with a hazy notion of the facts of life." To Charlie's bitter disappointment, he and Polly have no children; and he sees his house and shop going to his brother's son under the terms of their father's will. "Many a better cake didn't rise," cackles old Mrs. Cashman, but off go Charlie and Polly to Rome to touch the Holy Door that will cure their childlessness. It does not, and the result is a mad series of events, some of them steered cannily by that amusing Kerryman of earlier stories, Father Ring. "The Holy Door" is almost a "gag" story, but before it finishes some shrewd observations get themselves made about "God's inscrutable purpose in creating mankind in two sexes."

"News for the Church" is one of O'Connor's best. In most of these stories, although he retains precision of content, and his word for thought, action, gesture is right, his form is relaxed, at times flabby. In this story of an elderly priest and a young girl who comes to confess carnal intercourse—beginning with "I told lies, father" and revealing her life story now artlessly and now with knowing, friendly confidence—there is a crossing of two strong wills which reveals two persons who become fully, toweringly alive in a dozen pages. Beside this story the others, particularly the two "Don Juan" stories, which strike a false, cloying note, seem less powerful than they otherwise would. But "The Miracle," a yarn about a doughty old sinner who will confess only to an educated man, and "The Frying-Pan," with its factitious yet effective contrast of the ex-seminarian who wishes he'd "gone on" and the priest who begins to doubt his own vocation, are authentic O'Connor. And who else is there like him?

"Innocents," a book of short stories by a young English girl who won the Somerset Maugham Award with them, is also built around a central theme. In Miss Barker's stories there is ironic play with the idea that childhood owns a fierce kind of experience and adulthood a weak chink of innocence. In the soft mouth and plump cheek of a child she can see, and make the reader see, the "woman's future citadel." Two stories explore in a finished, diamond-hard way childhood brought to face (but not to understand) the death of another. A longish chronicle shows childhood experience flowering into

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Spring Books that Slipped into Summer

THE MEANING OF MAN

by Jean Mouroux

This is basic Christian sociology, lack of which has ruined so many well-intentioned efforts to help mankind. It is hard to exaggerate the revolution that might come to society if any considerable part of this book seeped through into the general consciousness. This is coming at the end of June. \$4.00.

THE SACRAMENTAL WAY

edited by Mary Perkins

This is a one-volume presentation of the doctrinal bases, ways, means and implications of the Liturgical Apostolate, taken from papers read at the Proceedings of the National Liturgical Weeks from 1940 to 1945. Father Shawn Sheehan has added suggestions for study for those who wish to use the book as a College or study group text. The authors include such experts as Father Godfrey Diekmann, Father Martin Hellriegel, Father Gerald Ellard, S.J., Msgr. Reynold Hillenbrand and Father H. A. Reinhold. It is coming next month, this is just a preliminary note, so that you will be looking out for it. \$3.75.

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the maturity of a pathetic adult doll who perpetually fends off "the disaster of being alone." All these stories are stamped with firmness of purpose and astonishing control. Miss Barker is more than observant; she is penetrating. And she writes with a fine lyric touch that eschews "arty" irrelevances. "Innocents" is fulfilment in narrow compass which promises good strong things to come.

RILEY HUGHES.

Our Friends and Foes. Frederick A. Houck. Herder. \$1.50.

MR. C. S. LEWIS, in his phenomenally successful "Screwtape Letters," has made the reading public devil-conscious. Father Frederick Houck, in a more factual and equally credible manner, maintains that interest. In "Our Friends and Foes" he presents an account of the Church's teaching and interesting facts about the prevalence of more than witches among us.

It is a revealing commentary upon our so-called scientific times that our interests lie rather with our foes than our friends in the spirit world. In the belief that the earnest soul's interests should be concerned rather with the good angels rather than their departed brethren, this volume treats of the good angels as well. The lengthy quotations from the English translation of the works of Aquinas will present some difficulty to the ordinary lay reader, unfamiliar with concentrated thought and technical terminology. However, for readers of all classes this volume may well serve as an invaluable handbook on a very practical phase of the most practical job in life, the salvation of one's soul.

MARK BARRON.

The Rise of the Spanish American Empire. Salvador de Madariaga. Macmillan. \$5.00.

TO MOST liberals, Salvador de Madariaga's absorbing history of the Spanish dominion in America will be anathema. For Madariaga has brought to bear the weight of his great scholarship in a pioneering effort to destroy the "all but universal prejudice against imperial Spain." The difficulties of this project are freely admitted. "In the Anglo-Saxon world," he writes, "it is an article of faith that Spain means cruelty and oppression." Behind this limited view of Spain as Conqueror and Inquisitor, however, lies a very simple political motivation: the British and French empires were systematically carved out of the Spanish. "Spain had to be wrong so that (they) could be right."

In exposing this patent falsification of history, Madariaga has delved into the whole structure of the Spanish state and the Spanish character. The picture he paints of the colonization of the Americas will astound the many accustomed to a stereotype of rapacious conquistador, benighted clergy, and heedless crown. That there were abuses in which all three played a conspicuous part, Madariaga would not and does not deny. But he can match inhumanity in the Latin Americas to equal, often greater, inhumanity in the British, French, and Dutch Americas. Admittedly, liberal democracy was neither the ideal nor the practice of the Spanish empire-builders, but there is overwhelming evidence in Madariaga's book to prove the broad humanity, the rising vision, and the historic perspective which they brought with them to the newly-discovered lands.

Even among the well-informed, there is small understanding of the exact political status of the Spanish

colonies. From the first, the Crown and the Spanish state considered the new world not a colony, not a gold mine to be plundered and then forgotten, but in a broad sense part of the imperium, ranking with the various kingdoms which made up the Peninsular state. To the King, it was *esos reinos*—those kingdoms—as opposed to *estos reinos*—these kingdoms. From the start, self-government from the bottom up was the rule, not the exception, as the record shows.

City councils protecting the rights of the Indians and of the non-nobility grew up with the houses of the first settlements. A whole body of law and custom, based on Royal decree and local statute, developed granting a wide degree of political and cultural autonomy and acting as a barrier between the people and the vice-regal governments. The schools and universities set up so promptly and in such profusion taught Latin (the universal tongue) but made no attempt to force Castilian on the population or to root out Indian dialects. On the contrary, the friars and priests made it a point to acquire fluency in these dialects so as to meet the Indians on common ground.

Conflict existed, but it was not the result of brutish domination:

"The strange mixture of anarchical feuds, disputes, rebellions, and civil wars," writes Madariaga, "along with the strongly legalistic turn of mind in the conquerors proves to be but the outcome of the struggle between these two forces latent in the Spain of those days: on the one hand, the cohesive force of the law, the norm, which was the essence of the Nation, born of, and still attached to, the Roman Empire; a force alive in all the conquerors, making them feel themselves living limbs of the Spanish Monarchy, in its turn the living limb of Christendom; and on the other hand, the fierce individualism of men whose powers of endurance and achievement have never been equaled, and cannot be measured with the tame standards of modern peacetime days—men, moreover, who suddenly found themselves in a political, as well as physical, wilderness."

There will be much learned and angry rebuttal of the evidence which Madariaga marshals to prove his thesis. There will be considerable and justifiable citation of the excesses of the Spanish—perpetrated by secular leaders and by the Inquisition. Despite this, the boundless courage and imagination of a great nation which singlehanded opened two continents and created a new civilization will be mute testimony in Madariaga's behalf. For to condemn Spain's grandeur by reason of her lesser misdeeds is as narrow and vicious as to reject the dream of Anglo-Saxon democracy because of the British Foreign office or our own Southern bigots.

RALPH DE TOLEDANO.

The Reshaping of French Democracy. Gordon Wright. Reynal. \$3.50.

HIGHLY recommended. This is the story and problems of governing France since her liberation in 1944. Mr. Wright, professor of history and third secretary of the American Embassy in Paris during the war, writes a clear, blow by blow description of the making of the constitution of the Fourth Republic. In doing this he gives us a picture not only of the trees but the forest: the shaping up of the new political forces in France which resolve into three major parties and also De Gaulle, the importance of the parties rather than the constitution, De

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Gaulle's political record and influence, an insight into the man himself, the strength and weakness of France handcuffed by the Communists, etc. Above all it clarifies the politics and dilemma of France today. Well written and with grasp of the situation, it is absorbing to the merest amateur.

ANN HUNTER.

Twenty-four American Cardinals. Brendan A. Finn. Bruce. \$5.00.

THIS IS A collection of brief popular sketches of all the present and former residents of the United States who have become Cardinals. Since these points are all that is required for inclusion, the author has had no difficulty in finding men of very widely varying backgrounds and achievements as subjects for his essays. He has included not only all the residential Archbishops but all the former Apostolic Delegates, some auditors of the Delegation, and a number of foreign prelates and religious who for one reason or another lived here for a while and later became Cardinals in other countries. Many who pride themselves on knowing a good deal of American Church History may have trouble identifying Mazzella and Sbarretti quickly, and many more will be astonished to find Cardinal Vives of Tuto listed as an American. It would be hard to think of any Curial Cardinal in modern times who would have seemed less at home here than the famous Spanish Capuchin who played so notable a rôle in the suppression of Modernism. His short visit here while he was still in his teens and had not learned English did not give him a chance to learn much about America.

Compiling all the information in this book was obviously a labor of love for Mr. Finn. It is too bad he did not give us more than the very general sketches he has supplied. Many of the prelates described so briefly deserve longer and more detailed sketches which would place them in better perspective. The size of their contributions to Church and State would be clearer to the reader, and their great influence would be better appreciated. In some of these essays the subject is the chief victim as he is smothered in his robes of state and his personality does not emerge clearly. This is due in part to a style that seems occasionally to be a clumsy copy of the extravagant adulation we associate with the Byzantine Patriarchate and which diminishes the appeal of a useful book.

F. D. COHALAN.

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